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ALL-AMERICA
CONFERENCE ON
VENEREAL DISEASES

WASHINGTON, D. C.

December 6 to 11, 1920

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM



Under the auspices of
U. S. Interdepartmental Social Hygiene Board
U. S. Public Health Service
American Red Cross
American Social Hygiene Association

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PURPOSE AND PLAN

The All-America Conference on Venereal Diseases is the first of a series of regional conferences suggested by the International Health Conference held at Cannes under the auspices of the League of Red Cross Societies. It is fitting that the first conference concern itself with the control of venereal diseases, for it is now generally recognized that these diseases constitute perhaps the largest and most important single factor now impairing public health.

It is the purpose of the administrative committee to bring together recognized authorities in their respective fields and especially to make possible a comparison and evaluation of the methods now being employed in various parts of the world for the control of venereal diseases. As far as possible the presentation of set papers will be avoided, it being felt that full and free discussion will be far more helpful to those who attend.

The program will be so arranged that it will be possible for any delegate to attend all the meetings. In general, the morning will be devoted to a discussion by the Conference Delegates of the scientific basis underlying the campaign for the control of venereal diseases, the afternoon to a discussion by the delegates of administrative methods, while the evening will be given over to general meetings where the various findings of the Conference Delegates will be presented for consideration by the entire membership of the Conference.

The Conference will be preceded by special addresses on topics allied to venereal disease control,

in some of the churches of Washington on Sunday evening, December 5th.

The opening general session of the Conference, to be held Monday evening, December 6, will be preceded by registration of all members. At this opening session, addresses will be made by the president of the Conference and by other speakers who will deal with the broader outlines of the subject.

Following this the Conference Delegates will take up, next morning, the work of preparing material to be presented to the entire membership at appropriate times.

The program here drawn up is presented in outline only, but it will serve to show the general scope of the Conference and the kind of discussions planned. These discussions will be in the hands of some of the most eminent authorities on the control of venereal diseases.

**A. Conference of Delegates (Morning Session).
The Scientific Basis of Control Measures**

Tuesday, Dec. 7. Present status and recent progress in medical investigation.

Wednesday, Dec. 8. Education as a means of controlling venereal diseases.

Thursday, Dec. 9. Law enforcement and protective social measures with individuals.

Friday, Dec. 10. Social influences in the control of venereal diseases.

Saturday, Dec. 11. Final session devoted to the formulation of reports.

Some idea of the importance of the conference may be gained from the following list of questions which have been proposed for discussion. The Conference Delegates will review past experiences and existing knowledge relating to the causes, carriers, treatment and prevention of venereal diseases, and prepare useful general statements covering answers to such questions as are here selected for illustration. Specifically the confer-

ence will endeavor to adopt recommendations relating to a practicable three year program for each of the North and South American countries participating, and to suggest plans for putting such program into effect.

Problems Relating to Medical Investigations.

1. To what extent should the Wassermann test be relied upon as evidence of syphilis in the absence of clinical symptoms?
2. Is neosalvarsan as effective as salvarsan in the treatment of syphilis?
3. Is arsphenamine equalled in the treatment of syphilis by other arsenicals now being used?
4. What is vulvo-vaginitis in infants? How does it arise? How should the condition be dealt with?
5. Are the common methods of treating gonorrhea in the female effective?
6. Is it possible to immunize against syphilis or gonorrhea?
7. Is it possible to determine statistically with a tolerable approximation to accuracy, the effect of syphilis and gonorrhea on the general death rate?
8. Is it feasible to secure accurate certification of venereal diseases on death certificates?
9. Has the internal administration of mercury a proper place in the treatment of syphilis?
10. Should acute infectious cases of venereal diseases be admitted to general hospitals? If so, what special facilities, if any, do they require?
11. Is gonorrhea curable? Is it commonly a self-limited disease? What criteria should be used in determining whether a cure has been effected?
12. How should the Wassermann test be used in dealing with syphilis?

Problems Relating to Education as a Means of Controlling Venereal Diseases.

1. Is our present scientific knowledge concerning venereal diseases sufficiently broad and firm to permit the development of effective campaign measures? If not, in what directions should it be developed?
2. Is the medical profession as a whole sufficiently

educated and trained to render the most effective aid in combating venereal diseases? If not, in what is this education or training defective and what steps should be taken to remedy the situation?

3. Are the medical schools devoting sufficient attention to the social and economic aspects of disease, especially in their relation to venereal diseases?
4. What role, if any, can the elementary schools play in the educational campaign for the control of venereal diseases? The secondary schools? The colleges?
5. At what age and how should a knowledge of venereal diseases be imparted to the younger generation?
6. What method of instructing persons about to marry can be devised that will be effective and not subject to abuse?
7. How much emphasis should be placed on venereal diseases in sex education in secondary schools?
8. How may moving pictures best be utilized in combating venereal diseases?
9. What can be done to secure greater assistance from newspapers in educating the public regarding venereal diseases?
10. Can we learn educational methods from the quack?

Problems Relating to Law Enforcement and Protective Social Measures with Individuals.

1. Has the general abolition of the segregated districts in the United States given satisfactory results from an epidemiological point of view?
2. Has there been an increase in promiscuity in the United States since the end of the war? If so, is this due to the repression of commercial prostitution, or to other causes?
3. Are the reformatory methods used with prostitutes effective?
4. Should fines ever be imposed on convicted prostitutes?
5. Is there an adequate protective program available by means of which communities can safeguard their wayward girls? If so, what is it?
6. Is there any discrimination against one sex in the enforcement of laws concerning prostitution in the United States?

7. Is the movement to make "age of consent" laws apply to both sexes sound and successful?
8. Should fornication be made a crime?
9. What is the after-history of the "charity girl?" Does she eventually adjust herself to social standards?
10. To what extent, on the average, are prostitutes sub-normal and otherwise deviates, mentally and physically?

Problems Relating to Social Influences in the Control of Venereal Disease.

1. Does economic pressure play an important part in leading women to become prostitutes?
2. Have recent advances in psychology thrown any light on the alleged "sex necessity?"
3. Can any relation be demonstrated between recreation facilities and delinquency?
4. Is the part of the population infected with venereal diseases inferior mentally, socially and economically to the uninfected part?
5. What becomes of the prostitutes who disappear from the "profession?"
6. Can the public dance hall be so regulated as to eliminate it as a contributing factor in the spread of venereal diseases? If so, how?
7. What influences lead a boy to become a patron of prostitution?
8. How much is the spread of venereal disease checked by educational propaganda using fear as its basis of appeal?
9. Do climatic influences play a part in determining the amount of delinquency and venereal disease infection in a community?
10. On what basis, from a public health point of view, should the state attempt to govern the issuance of marriage licenses?

B. Conference of Delegates (Afternoon Sessions).

Administrative Measures in the Control of Venereal Disease.

Tuesday, Dec. 7, to and including Friday, Dec. 10.
Administrative Measures in the United States,
Federal, State and Local.

Administrative Measures in Canada.

Dominion, Provincial and Local.

Administrative Measures in Latin-American Countries.

Administrative Measures in other countries.

Relation of official to extra-governmental agencies.

It will be noted that these discussions are arranged on a geographic basis, a plan by which it is believed the largest amount of practical application can be derived from the results of the Conference. Among the many administrative questions which public officials are frequently asked to answer are the following:

Problems Relating to Administrative Control Measures.

1. Has the prophylactic packet a place in the public campaign against venereal diseases?
2. Is notification of venereal diseases really effective? What measures should be employed to secure the notification of venereal diseases?
3. What are the relative advantages or disadvantages of having venereal disease clinics separate from other public clinics?
4. Should treatment at public venereal disease clinics be limited to those unable to pay? If, not, should such clinics charge a fee for treatment?
5. Should states or municipalities supply arsphenamine free (or at cost) for the treatment of syphilis in public hospitals or clinics? For the use of private physicians?
6. What is the role of voluntary agencies in the field of administrative control of venereal diseases?
7. Are clinics continuing treatment of the patients long enough to be of any value?
8. Should health officers be allowed to make arrests for prostitution?
9. Do police officers tend to use the sanitary code as a substitute for the criminal code? If so, is this desirable?
10. Are useful results achieved by placarding premises quarantined for syphilis or gonorrhea?

C. General Sessions (Evenings).

Authoritative Summaries of the Work in Venereal Disease Control.

Tuesday, Dec. 7. Terrible Toll of the Great Red Plague.
Speakers to be announced

Wednesday, Dec. 8. Juvenile delinquency and public health.
Speakers to be announced

Thursday, Dec. 9. Let there be Light! How educational measures can effectively combat the Great Red Plague.
Speakers to be announced

Friday, Dec. 10. A practicable program for combating venereal diseases.
Speakers to be announced

Visits to Places of Scientific Interest

Arrangements are being made to afford delegates special facilities for visiting the many places of scientific interest in which Washington abounds. Among these are:

U. S. Hygienic Laboratory
Bureau of the Census
Bureau of Standards
U. S. Naval Observatory
Government Hospital for the Insane
Walter Reed Hospital
Army Medical Museum
Surgeon General's Library
Smithsonian Institution
National Museum
Carnegie Institution
War Risk Insurance Bureau
Georgetown University
Library of Congress
etc.

Entertainments

It is quite impossible to give definite information so far in advance regarding the plans for the entertainment of delegates and members of the

Conference. Assurance can be given, however, that no effort will be spared to make attendance at the Conference a pleasure to be remembered.

Hotels

The Committee will be very glad to assist delegates in securing suitable hotel accomodations. Depending on the character of the hotel and of the location and character of the room desired the rates for these range from \$3.00 to \$6.00 per day, European plan. It is suggested that delegates have the Executive Secretary make suitable reservations, and that they therefore state exactly how much they wish to pay for accomodations, and the time of their expected arrival.

All correspondence should be addressed to

Executive Secretary

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